

REMARKS

Claims 12-37 are now pending in the application. Minor amendments have been made to the claims by preliminary amendment prior to the Examination of the patent application for classification purposes in response to a restriction requirement. The amendments to the claims contained herein are of equivalent scope as originally filed and, thus, are not a narrowing amendment.

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT AND ELECTION

In the Office Action, the Examiner required restriction under 35 U.S.C. 121 in the present application to one of the following inventions:

Group I – Claims 12-25, drawn to an apparatus, classified in class 403, subclass 58;

Group II – Claims 26-33, drawn to a method of bone fixation, classified in class 606, subclass 54; and

Group III – Claims 34-37 drawn to a gear mechanism, classified in class 74, subclass 89.14.

Accordingly, Applicants hereby elect with traverse Group I directed to claims 12-25. Applicants make this election without prejudice to filing one or more divisional applications directed to the non-elected groups. Applicants will cancel the claims directed to the non-elected groups when an indication of allowance of the elected group is received.

Applicants traverse the restriction and respectfully submit that all three groups of claims, as amended, are directed to external fixation means class 606, subclass 54.

Applicants have amended the claims by preliminary amendment to further clarify the field for classification purposes. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, it is believed that the outstanding Office Action has been fully complied with herein. If the Examiner has any questions or would like to personally discuss this application, she is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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